

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2006
Indiana Government Center
Indianapolis, IN

Voting Members Present: Carroll County – George Mears Cass County – Mercedes Brugh DNR – Steve Morris Huntington County – Mike Mettler Knox County – Shane Cooper Miami County – Ken Einselen Parke County – Steve Luther Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Warren County – Louise Jewell		Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy: Allen County Fountain County Gibson County Jay County Vermillion County
Proxies Steve Krull - Adams Co. – to president R. Weinzapful – Posey Co. – to John G. Ernest Passwater - Wabash Co. – to ? K. Huffman - Wells Co. – to Mike Mettler		Non-Voting Members Not Present INDOT DNR – Historic Preservation & Archaeology
Non-Voting Members Present: IDEM – Timothy Kroeker Indiana Tourism – Brian Blackford		Guests: Stanton Lambert – Wabash River Enhancement Corporation
Commission and DNR Staff Present: Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director		

CALL TO ORDER

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1 PM. John asked everyone to introduce themselves and the county they represent.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 14TH MEETING MINUTES

John Gettinger asked for approval of the November 9th meeting minutes. Mike Mettler made a motion to approve the minutes. Ken Einselen seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

John Gettinger distributed a written report of events at which he participated (see attached). John distributed a copy of the newsletter for the Partnership for Turtle Creek.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT (see attached)

Ron James submitted a detailed report that was sent out with the meeting agenda. Due to the urgency of arrangements being made for the WFYI documentary (see report below), Ron reported water trail development tasks have sort of been put on hold. Ron also

reported that David Dale and Jim Faulkner are seeking the commission's assistance with scheduling of public displays of their paintings along the Wabash River. The paintings will preview at the State Museum from March 25th to June 25th. The paintings will then go on tour with displays across the state ending at the Minnetrista Center in Muncie in 2007.

FINANCE REPORT (see attached)

Steve Morris distributed copies of the commission's latest financial report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legislative: Mercedes Brugh will send commission members a packet of informational material similar to what was used last year. Each commission member is encouraged to meet with their respective legislators for approximately 10 minutes to convey how the commission is meeting its goals and the goals of the legislators. Mercedes asked that meetings with legislators be accomplished by January 28th. She noted that legislators have been invited to the WFYI documentary on January 24th and that this would be a good time to meet with them. Mercedes also noted that legislators will typically be in Indianapolis during the week days, but may be home on weekends.

Water Trail: Ron James reported that for various reasons no bids had been received on design of the water trail maps. Ron will work with DNR Purchasing to rebid. Ron also stressed that he needs help in getting county access site contacts to enter into agreements for water trail sign placement and maintenance.

River Road/Heritage Community signage: No report

Wabash Video: Ron James showed a three minute preview of the WFYI documentary, The Wabash – Life on the 'Bright White River'. WFYI is still editing and will only have about one half hour for a preview showing at the Indiana State Museum on January 24th. The premier viewing on WFYI television will be January 29th at 9 PM. Early promotional material did not recognize the commission. Ron and Hoosier Energy voiced concerns about this and the commission is now receiving recognition. Postcards invitations are being sent out for the State Museum preview. An email invite will be available soon. Legislators are being invited and several have already confirmed attendance. The State Museum will seat 250 people. With approximately 100 expected from WFYI membership, there should be plenty of seating family members and other individuals that commission members feel compelled to invite. The documentary will eventually be released to other public broadcast stations in Indiana and surrounding states. DVD's will eventually be available.

Lucky Neiburger expressed concerns over using a title for the documentary that includes "Bright White River". Lucky believes some viewers will mistake the documentary for as something that was done for the White River instead of the Wabash River. Lucky moved to contact WFYI expressing concerns and suggesting a fix such as putting quotation marks around the words "Bright White" to help convey that this is descriptive as opposed to the name of the river. Ken Einselen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Education: John Gettinger reported he is talking with Indiana State University. He will have more to report at the next meeting. Commission members briefly discussed grade levels and curriculum focus.

Nominating: Keith Ruble reported the nominating committee nominated John Gettinger for President and Norman (Lucky) Neiburger for Vice-President. There were no nominations from the floor. Louise Jewell moved nominations be closed and Mercedes Brugh seconded. By acclamation, John Gettinger was elected President and Lucky Neiburger was elected Vice-President of the commission.

OLD BUSINESS

Interpretive Brochure

Steve Morris reported the quantities of the new brochures were shipped to state rest areas and welcome centers over the holidays.

Commission Retreat

Commission members were all sent a report from the 2004 commission retreat. It was decided to not hold a retreat in 2006 and continue to work on the action goals established at the 2004 retreat.

Invitation to DNR Director to Attend WRHCC Meeting

Ron James reported that DNR Director, Kyle Hupfer, has confirmed that he will attend the March 8th commission meeting.

County Commissioner Appointments to WRHCC

Steve Morris reported that several counties have failed to officially send in their appointments. Steve will follow up with these counties.

Indiana River Rally

Ron James reported he has been discussing the idea of an Indiana River Rally with a number of organizations including The Rivers Institute at Hanover, The Nature Conservancy, and the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy. Louise Jewell moved that a committee be formed to explore the idea further and report at the March meeting. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion carried. Committee members will include Ron James, George Mears, Ken Einselen, and Luck Neiburger as chair.

Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy

Ron James reported that he is enrolled and will actually be developing and presenting at one of the ten modules.

National River Rally

Mike Mettler expressed an interest in attending the National River Rally being held May 5-9 in New Hampshire. Subject to state budget approval, Lucky Neiburger moved that the commission pay expenses for Mike Mettler to attend the River Rally. Louise Jewell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Support for SR 66 toll bridge at New Harmony

Ron James reported he sent a letter of support for keeping the SR 66 bridge in place at New Harmony.

Adjusted Budget

Steve Morris distributed a proposed adjusted budget for the commission. It was suggested to negate a proposed \$1200 reduction from the travel line item and increase the water trail reduction by this same amount. Lucky Neiburger moved to adopt the adjusted budget with the travel line item restored to its original amount the water trail decreased accordingly. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Indiana Government Efficiency Commission reply

Ron distributed copies of the commission's response to a questionnaire for the Government Efficiency Commission that was completed by an ad hoc committee shortly after the November commission meeting.

Greater Lafayette Community Development Corporation request for support

Lucky Neiburger reported the Greater Lafayette Community Development Corporation requested a letter of support for a Brownfields Grant application through IDEM. Lucky moved to send a letter of support. Ken Einselen seconded. Motion carried.

Transportation Heritage Corridor

Ron James reported an effort is underway to pursue recognition through the National Park Service for the Maumee River and a portion of the Wabash River as a Transportation Heritage Corridor. A meeting is scheduled for January 24th in Ft. Wayne. Lucky moved to have John Gettinger and Ron James attend the meeting and report back to the commission. Keith Ruble seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Select County Representatives to write articles for the next *Reflections*

Vigo, Sullivan and Carroll counties were selected to submit articles for the e-newsletter.

Announcements

Louise Jewell announced an education program about "big rivers" being held in Louisville, KY on March 3rd and March 18th. More information is available at the following website: www.livinglandsandwaters.org. Louise attended one of these workshops last year and found it very informative.

Brian Blackford announced that the Indiana Office of Tourism has completed a strategic plan that is now available on their website at www.enjoyindiana.com. Brian announced a tourism related product development seminar being held on February 22nd and that the Hoosier Hospitality Conference will be taking place March 21-22.

Louise Jewell asked if anyone knew of grant funding that would help restore a historic building in Independence that had burned down. It was suggested that she contact Indiana Historic Landmarks Foundation for assistance.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 PM.

The next meeting will be held March 8, 2006 in Conference Room 1, Indiana Government Center, Indianapolis.